

# SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS

## Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- The human person is central, the clearest reflection of God among us.
- Each person possesses a basic dignity that comes from God, not from race or gender, age or economic status.
- The test of every institution or policy is whether it enhances or threatens human life and human dignity.
- We believe people are more important than things.

## Call to Family, Community and the Common Good

- The human person is both sacred and social.
- We realize our dignity and the rights in relationship with others in community.
- No community is more central than the family- the basic cell of society.
- "We are one body; when one suffers we all suffer."
- Our participation in the up building of society is both a right and an obligation.

## Rights and Responsibilities

- People have fundamental right to life, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment.
- All people have a right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to respect the rights of others in the wider society and to work for the common good.
- Any denial of these rights harms the persons and wounds the community.

## Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members.
- The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation.
- We are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.
- The overarching Gospel principle is the obligation to attend to the poor- "the least of these."

## Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- People have the right to decent and productive work, fair wages, to form and join unions, private property, and economic initiative.
- The economy exists to serve the people, not the other way around.
- Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a vocation, a participation in creation.

## Solidarity

- We are one human family and are interdependent.
- Our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic, and ideological differences.
- We are called to work globally for justice.
- Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in an interdependent world.
- Solidarity calls us to stand united with the poor and the powerless as our own brothers and sisters.

## Care for God's Creation

- We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.
- Care for the earth is a requirement of our faith.
- We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation.